

American Opinion Summary

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Department of State

No. 88

September 18, 1962

1. BERLIN

Editors find some comfort in Moscow's apparent willingness to postpone a "showdown" on Berlin until after our November elections. While this "breather" is no cause for celebrating, it does reflect "some awareness in Moscow of the dangers of letting things get out of hand," says the New York Post. And it could mean that there is still time for a negotiated settlement, adds the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Meanwhile, several see another "small gain" in Soviet compliance with the allied order to replace buses for armored cars in West Berlin (Watertown Times, Phila. Inquirer). Western "firmness has again paid off" in this incident, the Baltimore Sun and Christian Science Monitor contend. But with others, they warn the West must "stay braced" for a renewal of Soviet pressure.

More support from our allies in Berlin is urged by Sen. Mansfield, who sees the situation there growing "steadily worse." As Time magazine criticizes "chronic indecision" among the allies on even "minor" issues, the New York Times insists that the greatest possible Western unity is required to persuade Khrushchev of our determination to stay in Berlin.

2. CUBA

President Kennedy's recent restatement of Cuban policy evokes continuing strong responses from both backers and critics of the Administration's "avoidance of direct forceful action" against the Soviet buildup on the island republic.

Supporters laud his "rational and sane decision" [e.g., Wash. Post, Boston Herald, C. S. Monitor, N.Y. Post, Denver Post; Crosby Noyes of Wash. Star, Chalmers Roberts of Wash. Post, Kenneth Crawford in Newsweek; Dem. Sens. Mansfield (Mont.) and Humphrey (Minn.)].

"For the second time he set the Cuban matter in perspective--calmly, rationally and factually," says the Milwaukee Journal; and until the need arises to "liquidate the situation," the country "will do well to leave the matter in the hands of the president and his military and diplomatic advisers." To the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Mr. Kennedy voiced "the sober truth, that for the present, doing nothing in Cuba except what we have been doing is far wiser than plunging into military or quasi-war

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CUBA
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adventures." In fact, adds Walter Lippmann, rather than "doing nothing" about Cuba, "we are doing just about everything that can be done short of going to war."

Several voice "general agreement" with the Presidential statement, but remain dissatisfied on some points. The Kansas City Times welcomes the absence of any "resignation to the permanent existence" of a "Communist" Cuba, but wishes the President "could have been more specific on measures that can be taken." To the Philadelphia Inquirer, his position is "fair and reasonable," however, "there is no time to lose" in taking whatever "preventive measures" he envisions. Taking issue with the call of some Republicans for military action, Sen. Kuchel (R-Calif.) basically agrees with the President's statement, but holds that he should say it again "in unmistakable language."

Arthur Krock is critical of the Administration's "continued reluctance to concede publicly" that it has "set limits to the historic thrust" of the Monroe Doctrine--a modification that "can be supported as sound policy" in the nuclear age and if explained to the people could cause them to be "less impressed by critics" of the President's Cuban policy. The New York Herald Tribune concurs in the President's "giving Khrushchev time to pause and to reconsider" his intrusion into the Caribbean; but warns that for Messrs. Kennedy and Bowles to denounce those calling for action now as "extremists" is "unwise and dangerous."

But critics hold that the President "still ignores the fact" that Cuba "has already become a threat to U.S. and Hemisphere security" [e.g., Chicago Trib., Cincinnati Enquirer, National Observer; John S. Knight, David Lawrence, Max Lerner, Virginia Prewett; Republican Sens. Goldwater (Ariz.), Scott (Pa.), Javits and Keating (N.Y.); Rep. Alger (R-Tex.)].

"For my taste there is too great a tendency to belittle the problem and to pretend that it is something we need only meet in the future, rather than something we have to begin to deal with now," Roscoe Drummond protests. William E. Hearst Jr. charges that "the 'drawing the line' specifications laid down by the President" are "disappointing" because--"by default--they accepted the announced Soviet presence in Cuba" in "flagrant defiance of the Monroe Doctrine."

"If the U.S. continues to appear weak and lets the Soviets move about the Hemisphere with impunity, there is no telling how far they will go," the Wall Street Journal argues, adding: there are avenues of U.S. action other than "doing nothing at all" or "mounting a military invasion" of Cuba. But Time magazine insists that "the only possibility that promises a quick end to Castro--if that is what is wanted--is a direct U.S. invasion of Cuba."